III. TANALA ABORIGINES

173 563 Most of the Tanala clans claim to have originated either in the plateau or on the coast but there are two gentes of the Menabe, the Teroandrika in the south and the Zanakanony in the north, whom the others believe to be aboriginal. At the present time neither of these has a definite territory, their members living scattered in the villages of the other clans. They have intermarried until there are no full-blooded individuals left and have adopted the culture of the other Tanala, but there are some curious and suggestive traditions in regard to them. The Teroandrika are said to have been very short and of slight build, like undeveloped boys. They were dark [142] brown, almost black in color and had short, kinky hair, round faces and round staring eyes. The peculiarity of the eyes seems to have been their most striking feature, for three different informants mentioned it first in describing them. They seem to have been in a low stage of culture, but the only thing clearly remembered is that they had no *fady* ("taboos").

[142] The Zanakanony in the north were also short but taller than the Teroandrika, perhaps five feet to five feet four inches. They were light brown with long wavy or at most curly hair and were heavily muscled, with thick chests, broad shoulders, and heavy thighs and calves. Their waists, wrists, knees and ankles were slender. One informant said that they "were built like Frenchmen." When other clans entered the northern territory they found the Zanakanony living in caves. They built no houses except leaf shelters "like those the Tanala build when they have to spend a night in the forest." They had no metal, shaping their wooden implements with flakes of quartz crystal. These were made by holding a large crystal on end and striking the top with a round river boulder until it cracked into pieces lengthwise. The best fragments were chosen, used until blunted, and then thrown away. Naturally rough stones were used for grinding and polishing. They had neither the blow gun nor the bow. Their only weapons were spears made from the wood of the *Lambiouna* or the *Aniowa*, a species of palm. These spears were not barbed but might have two or more points if they could find a stick that forked properly. They also made forked spears by splitting the end of the stick with stone wedges and binding it below the split with vines, a technique still employed in making fish spears (Fig. 2, d). They made fire with a bamboo fire saw, although all the other clans made it with the firedrill. Informants were uncertain whether they

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301 When in full dress, both men and women wear flat silver bracelets, open on one side (Fig. 22, c), and heavy silver neck chains. A few of the bracelets are made locally, but most of them, together with the chains, are obtained from the Betsileo. I never saw a finger ring worn. Feathers, flowers, or other natural products are never used for decoration. Body and face painting occur as a part of some ceremonies, but never for decoration.

302 At present, nearly all men wear their hair cut short, European fashion. Women retain the ancient hair-dressing, which was originally the same for both sexes. The scalp is divided by a series of lengthwise and crosswise partings into a number of rectangular patches, each about 2 inches square. The hair from each patch is then rubbed with grease and water, and braided. In braiding, it is drawn out as tightly as possible, to eliminate the natural kink. If the hair is short and woolly, the end of the braid is wrapped with a thread of raffia and the braids stand out from the head in all directions. If the hair is long, each braid is rolled into a flat, oval plaque, like a leaf, and securely sewn with thread. The plaques lie flat on the head, overlapping. The coiffure is then soaked with oil, to discourage vermin. The hair is rarely dressed oftener than once a month. Combs of wood or bamboo splints are used for dressing the hair, but are never worn (Fig. 22, g, h, j, k). In former times, Zafimaniry men sometimes attached a short string of large beads or some other small charm to the central braid on the back of the head (Fig. 22, e, f).

• 142 The native beard and body hair are naturally light. There is a good deal of individual variation, but even the hairiest natives are less so than the average north European. Men are almost always clean shaven. I was told that old men sometimes grew beards, but 302 I never saw one. If the facial hair is sparse, it is plucked out with small iron tweezers. If it is fairly heavy, it is shaved off with a small knife of ordinary form (Fig. 1, f). In shaving, the beard is moistened with cold water and scraped off a few hairs at a time. The razors are dull and rough-edged, and the process is slow and painful. Both sexes pluck the pubic and axillary hair.

304 Both men and women tattoo slightly on the arms and breast, but never on the face. The most extensive tattooing is seen among the Zafimaniry, where women often have bracelets tattooed on the wrists and a sort of band or collar on the chest. The designs used here are similar to those used in the native wood carving, but simpler.